

Guide: Curriculum Vitae

To help you write your Curriculum Vitae (or in short CV), we made an elaborate guide which you can use during this process. Furthermore, here you can find tips on tips on the layout of the document and tips on taking a picture for your CV. We wish you all the best of luck in making your CV! We also offer checks on your CV. [Find out how to get your CV checked here.](#)



wur.eu/studentcareerservices

Parts to include in your CV

1. Curriculum Vitae, name and picture

On top of your CV you can mention the word 'Curriculum Vitae' in full, your name and include a picture of yourself. It may seem obvious that the document presented is your CV, but by stating the word 'Curriculum Vitae', there will be no doubt about its content. Next to this, you can state your name in a big(ger) font, as this will show immediately to whom this CV belongs. Furthermore, by adding a picture to your CV, organizations will have a clear image of who is applying for the position. However, only include a picture of yourself if you feel comfortable with it. In the Netherlands it is often preferred, but your own preference is always leading. When you are applying in another country, try to find out (online) what is common for that specific country. Tips for taking a professional picture for on your CV can be found at the end of this guide.

2. Contact / Personal details

As the name already says, in your contact/personal details, information can be found on how to contact you. First state your email address, phone number and (shortened) LinkedIn URL. By stating your digital contact details first, it is easier for companies to contact you (as not many companies will invite you for a job interview by post anymore). Consider to mention your current place/country of living. When applying in a country other than your native country, add your nationality. Information such as date/place of birth, gender, etc. is optional.

Tip! Make sure your LinkedIn URL is shortened, as this gives a more professional look. How you can do this is stated on the following website: [Customize Your Public Profile URL | LinkedIn Help.](#)

3. Personal profile

A (personal) profile is a short description (paragraph / around 6 sentences) focusing on your skills/experiences that are relevant to the position you are applying for. It is a summary of your professional identity; a combination of your content-based focus/passion/drive and your talents. At the end, you can also state what kind of internship/job you are looking for, in which field and which start date you would prefer.

Tips!

- Try to avoid the word 'I' in your profile. If you do decide to use it, try to avoid the word as the first word of a sentence or paragraph and try to not use it too much so that the emphasis is not too much on 'I'.
- When you are applying for a specific vacancy, you can consider to try and match your profile with the organization or vacancy by adding info about relevant skills/experiences/ambition. For example, address some key skills that they require and that you possess or try to match your ambition to theirs (this means that you can have different profile texts for different vacancies). This way, the recruiter will recognize the ideal candidate in you.

Examples for inspiration:

- *MSc Environmental Sciences student specialized in agriculture. Experienced in working with ArcGIS and QGIS. My ambition is to develop digital tools for large scale sustainable agriculture. Looking for a job in data sciences within the field of agriculture. Preferable start date from September 2023.*
- *BSc Business & Consumer student with a specialization in consumer behaviour. My ambition is to help consumers make conscious and sustainable purchases in their everyday life. My great communication skills help me to connect with others easily. Looking for a job in marketing from September 2023 onwards.*

4. Education

The section education is a list of the most relevant educational programs you followed, such as your MSc, BSc, and secondary school. Start with listing your most recent educational program. First mention the start/end date (if you are still enrolled, you can state your start date followed by '- present'), the name of your program, followed by the institution/university, specialization/track. Also, you can include your thesis and relevant courses and projects. Try to mention only those courses that may be relevant to the position you will apply for, rather than naming all of them. For example, a format of this would look like the following:

08/2021-present Name BSc/MSc programme

- University name:
- Specialisation/track:
- Thesis: (title, short description, method, tasks, result of the research):
- Relevant courses: (make a selection)
- Research project: (Academic Consultancy Training: title, short description, tasks, your role, result):

Tip! We often see that students in their master don't mention their high school on their CV anymore.

5. Work experience

This section includes all your relevant work experiences. Again, start with listing your most recent work experience first. If you have already done an internship, you can state it in this section. First mention the start/end date, the function you had, followed by the company name and location, a short description (for example, your department) and lastly a summation of your tasks, responsibilities and/or results/skills achieved. -Elaborate on the parts that are most relevant to the position you are applying for. Keep the experiences that are less relevant short. An exemplary format of this can be the following:

08/2021-present Function/role

- Organisation name and location:
- Short description
- Tasks, responsibilities and/or results/skills achieved:

6. Extra-curricular activities (optional)

In the section Extra-curricular activities you can mention those activities that are not educational or work related. For example, here can be listed voluntary work, board membership, and/or a committee in study- or student association. Like your work experience, first mention the start/end date, the function you had, followed by the organisation name and location, a short description (for example, your department) and lastly a summation of your tasks, responsibilities and/or results/skills achieved. An exemplary format of this can be the following:

08/2021-present Function/role

- Organisation name and location:
- Short description
- Tasks, responsibilities and/or results/skills achieved:

7. Training/certificates (optional)

In this section, you can mention the relevant trainings you followed or relevant certificates you obtained. Examples can be a first course or online trainings. A format of this can be the following:

08/2021-present **Name of training**
• Short description

Tip! A long list of achievements and certification is not inviting to read. Try to make a selection of the most relevant ones in relation to the position you are applying for.

8. Skills

On your CV, include a list of skills. This can be a combination of hard and soft skills. Hard skills are specific competencies or knowledge from which your level of experience can be measured. Examples of hard skills are languages, IT skills (like SPSS, R, etc.), and Lab skills. Soft skills are skills such as presentation skills or leadership skills. When in doubt about which skills to include, have a look at our [List with skills for inspiration](#).

Tips!

- At languages, name the language and the level. Additional info is not really necessary.
- An often-mentioned skill is Microsoft Office. However, as many people nowadays can work well with these programs, you may want to list this skill at the end of your list. This way, your other (more difficult and harder to grasp) hard skills are more noticeable.
- When applying for a specific vacancy, make a selection of skills relevant to the vacancy or organisation (have a look at the vacancy requirements). Mention the most relevant skill first / on top of your list.

9. Additional information (optional)

If you have any other relevant information for the position that you will apply for, you can mention that in this section. For example, here you may list your publications, your (relevant!) interests, whether you have a Drivers license (and which one), and (if applicable) if you are willing to move or learn a new language.

10. References (optional)

If you have worked somewhere or had a very close (professional) relationship with someone, you may want to ask them to be your referent. A company can contact your referent if they want more information about you and the way you work. Always ask someone to be your referent and make sure this person has a positive view about you. This, as you want to make sure the referent will state why to hire you (instead of why not). If there is someone willing to be your referent, you can state at the last section of your CV: '*References available upon request*'. Do not place the actual contact details of your referent in your CV. This way, companies will contact you if they want to contact your referent. Consequently, you can let your reference know that you applied for a certain position and that they will contact them about you. The benefit of this is that you can ask your referent to tell the company about certain characteristics of you that can be important for the position.

Tips for the layout and style of your CV

- **Length:** A CV is maximum two pages long. Try to focus on your most relevant experiences only. With relevant is meant those experiences which may be relevant to the job/internship you are applying for. If preferred, a CV can also be a one pager.
- **Programs to create your CV in:** There are multiple programs you can use to create your CV in. Below, some programs that are often used are listed:
 - Microsoft Word: Many CV's are made in Microsoft Word. Although many people just use a white, empty document, the program offers many templates that you can use to create your CV in. Using a pre-made template makes creating a CV easier and you can distinguish your CV from others as most of them have fancy designs. These templates can be found the following way: when you open Microsoft Word, there is a search area. If you type 'CV' there, multiple CV templates are shown which you can download to use.

-
- Canva: Canva is a free platform in which you can easily design beautiful CV's, as there are hundreds of professional templates you can choose from. These templates can be altered to your own preference. You can do this by creating a free account on the following website: [Home - Canva](#).
 - Adobe Indesign: design tool for experienced designers.
 - Europass: This website is created by the European Union to create a CV quite easily. Despite the convenience, the Europass templates always include watermarks and the formats take in a lot of in your CV (which makes it hard to stick to two pages and decreased the readability of your document). Therefore, we advise to create your CV with a different program.
 - **Font:** Use a font that is easy to read, such as Arial, Verdana etc. Furthermore, it is advised to make use of different font styles to highlight your experiences even more, such as **bold**, *Italic*, underline and bullet lists.
 - **PDF:** Always send your CV (and motivation letter) in PDF-format when you apply for a position.

Tips for taking a good picture for your CV / LinkedIn

- **Format:** Make sure your face is clearly visible. To focus on your face, it is advised to take the picture in which the area from your shoulders/chest to the top of your head can be seen. Consequently, it is best to take a picture from the front;
- **Clothes:** Wear formal clothes, for example clothes that you would wear for a job interview;
- **Hair and makeup:** Try to keep your hair and makeup neutral, as it may draw the attention too much from your face;
- **Facial expression:** Try to keep your facial expressions professional. With this, the following is meant: in western countries it is advised to look friendly and confident on your CV picture (you can smile), while other countries around the world prefer a photo in which neutral facial expressions are the standard. Either way, when making the photo, try to pretend you are walking into a great job interview and imagine how your face would look like (and stick to that facial expression).
- **Background:** It is wise to make sure your background is neutral. For example, you may want to take a picture in front of a wall or have a blurred background. As students from Wageningen University & Research often apply for positions that have links to sustainability, you might want to consider taking a picture in front of a tree/bush, so that the background color is mainly green (which is often linked to as a color for sustainability).
- **Being alone in the picture:** Try to include a picture in which you are alone. This way, there can be no confusion about who the CV belongs to.
- **Light:** You may want to stick to natural daylight, as it can give you 'a fresh look'. Furthermore, this makes sure you are clearly visible on the picture. For this, you may want to take a picture in front of a window or outside.
- **Taking the picture:** Ask someone else to take the picture for you. Selfies are not very professional and by letting someone else take a picture for you, you are able to focus on your facial expressions. You can also attend on of our CV/LinkedIn photoshoots. Check our [career events](#) to find out when the next photoshoot takes place.
- **Website:** Are you in doubt if your picture is suitable for your CV? You can have your picture checked at the following website: <https://www.snappr.co/photo-analyzer/>.